

In the claims:

Please amend the claims as shown below:

1. (Currently amended) A method of monitoring a childbirth process of a pregnant woman, comprising:
 - 5 in a measuring step (26), measuring a lactate concentration (15b);
 - in a comparison step (28), determining whether the measured lactate concentration (15b) is greater than a lactate threshold interval (29); and
 - 10 subjecting the pregnant woman to alternative child birth options (32) when the lactate concentration (15b) is greater than the lactate threshold interval (29).
- 15 2. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein the method further comprises determining whether labor is progressing normally in a determining step (22).
- 20 3. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 2 wherein the method further comprises measuring the lactate concentration (15b) when labor, as determined in the determining step (22), has not started or is not progressing normally.
- 25 4. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 3 wherein the method further comprises stimulating in a stimulating step (34) the pregnant woman to give birth when the lactate concentration (15b) is less than the lactate threshold interval (29).
- 30 5. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 4 wherein the method further comprises determining in a determining step (36) whether labor is progressing normally.

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6. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 5 wherein the method further comprises measuring the lactate concentration ~~(15b)~~ when the labor is not progressing normally, as determined in the determining step ~~(36)~~.

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7. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein the method further comprises determining in a determining step 40 whether labor is progressing normally when the lactate concentration ~~(15b)~~ is within the lactate threshold interval ~~(29)~~ and providing stimulation to the pregnant woman when it is determined in the determining step that the labor is not normal.

15 8. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein the method further comprises in a measuring step ~~(12)~~, measuring a lactate concentration ~~(15a)~~ in vaginal fluids; in a comparison step ~~(14)~~, determining whether the measured lactate concentration is greater than a predetermined lactate 20 concentration ~~(13)~~ that indicates that the membrane has ruptured and amniotic fluid has passed from an amnion of the pregnant woman.

25 9. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 8 wherein the method further comprises waiting a waiting period ~~(18)~~ when the lactate concentration ~~(15a)~~ is less than the lactate concentration ~~(13)~~ and again measuring the lactate concentration in a measuring step ~~(20)~~.

30 10. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 9 wherein the method further comprises waiting a waiting period ~~(16)~~ when the lactate concentration ~~(15a)~~ is greater than the lactate concentration ~~(13)~~.